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DR. PRESSLY'S ADDRESS TO HIS STUDENTS AT PITTSBURGH.

We have been favoured with a copy of the above. Dr. Pressly is Professor of Divinity to the Associate Reformed Synod of the West, America; and the Address was delivered to the Students of the Theological Seminary under his care at Pittsburgh. It opens in the following manner:—

Your appearance in this place as candidates for the sacred office supposes, that by the operation of the Spirit of God upon your hearts, you have been awakened to a sense of your lost and perishing condition as sinners, and that by the grace of God, you have been translated from the power of darkness into the kingdom of God's dear Son. And having obtained a good hope through grace, you have been moved by zeal for the glory of God, and compassion for the souls of your fellow-men, who are perishing in ignorance and sin, to engage in the work of proclaiming the unsearchable riches of Christ. Impressed with a sense of your obligations to God, who, as you hope, has called you by his grace, you have devoted yourselves to his service, and desire to be co-workers with God in promoting the spiritual and eternal interests of your fellow-men. Regarding yourselves as the Lord's, and not your own, having been bought with a price, you esteem it your duty to glorify God in your body and in your spirit which are God's by publishing his Gospel to a perishing world. The preaching of the Gospel you regard as God's own ordinance for the conversion of the world, and for the edification of the church. And with a view to prepare yourselves, by the blessing of God, for this important work, you have entered upon a course of theological study.

If the circumstance of students presenting themselves at the Divinity Class as candidates for the ministry, *should* proceed only on the supposition of their being in a state of grace, we would ask all objectors whatever, why should not our Church courts, whose office and charge it is both to *try* and to *train* candidates for the Christian ministry, prove and examine them as to their evidences of having some experience of that salva-

tion which it will be the business of their lives to preach to their fellow-men?

Since it is the design of a Divinity Class to prepare students for preaching the Gospel, Dr. Pressly very properly proceeds to show what the Gospel is. He demonstrates fully that it is not a system discovered by human reason. Nor is it, he observes, a system of recent invention. Here he introduces the following apt remarks:—

In an age distinguished for discoveries in the various arts, and for improvements in every department of human science, the young and aspiring theologian is in great danger of being seized with a desire to acquire celebrity by making improvements in the system of Christian theology. And the adventurous spirit boldly demands; "Since the world is growing wiser, and human knowledge is increasing, and improvements are made in every department of secular science, why should there not be improvements made in the department of Christian theology?" However specious and imposing this interrogatory may at first view appear, a little reflection may convince you that the cases here supposed to be analogous are widely different. For our knowledge in the arts and sciences, we are dependent on human authority, while all our knowledge of the Gospel is derived from the authority of God. All our scientific knowledge being the result of human investigation, there is room for progressive improvement and further discoveries, because the knowledge of man is imperfect. But the system of Christian theology is unfolded in a volume which comes to us recommended by the authority of God. And all that remains for us to do, is simply to inquire what is revealed in this book. We should indeed examine with much prayerful deliberation, and see that what we embrace as the Gospel is revealed in the Bible. And this being ascertained, our philosophy must bow before the authority of God's word.

Let me therefore entreat you to banish from your minds the presumptuous and preposterous idea, that you are to signalize yourselves by making new discoveries in the field of gospel truth. The great doctrines of the Gospel, properly so called, were as well understood by the humble believer in Christ, and were as really the spiritual aliment and solace of his soul, many centuries before you were born, as they probably ever will be in this world. Beware, therefore, lest the vanity of your minds, by leading you to embrace and teach a new Gospel, should expose you to the anathema pronounced against those who preach another Gospel. The doctrines of the Gospel are old, tried, established truths; and if you would profit the souls of men, make yourselves well acquainted with them. If you would be instrumental in edifying the church of God, preach Christ crucified, carefully avoiding all cunningly devised fables.

After showing that the Gospel is a revelation of the way of pardon and acceptance, and that it is by means of the truths of the Gospel that the sinner's understanding is to be enlightened, and through his understanding that his heart is to be affected, in order that he may be turned from sin unto God, Dr.

Pressly then proceeds to point out how the Gospel is to be preached, so that it may most effectually subserve the ends for which it was ordained. Here he introduces the following directions, which he illustrates and enforces with great clearness and force :—

"1. Let the truth be exhibited in such a manner, that its tendency may always be to lead the sinner to the cross of Christ.

"2. Let the Gospel be preached in plainness and simplicity, and free from all the foreign admixture of human wisdom."

Under this direction we find the following excellent remarks, which apply not less to Ireland than to America :—

There is a simplicity characteristic of the Gospel which has always been offensive to the pride of the human intellect. And the presumption of human wisdom has ever manifested a proneness to add something to the Gospel or to take something from it, with a view to make it more acceptable to the depraved heart. And hence, in some instances, doctrines which are essential to the Gospel system, are either rejected or explained away, while in other instances, where the truth is not entirely discarded, it is exhibited in such a meretricious dress that the simplicity of the Gospel is lost. Of these important doctrines of the Gospel, which philosophy falsely so called, has ever been reluctant to receive, that of Original Sin, of the Sinner's Moral Inability to do good, of Justification through the imputed righteousness of Christ, and of the absolute necessity of the agency of the Holy Spirit in Regeneration, occupy a prominent place. Whether we consider the importance of these doctrines in themselves, their intimate connexion with all that is precious in the Gospel, or the specious character of the objections which are urged against them, it is especially requisite that those who are set for the defence of the truth be well acquainted with them, and thoroughly established in them. These are not matters of mere speculation, in relation to which diversity of opinion may be of no practical importance, but they are truths essential to the Gospel system. and which exert a powerful influence over the heart and life of the Christian.

But where the truth is not entirely discarded, it may be exhibited so imperfectly, or it may be presented with such human accompaniments, that the practical effect is much the same as though it were rejected. Instead of exhibiting the Gospel in its native simplicity, it may be presented by human wisdom, in such a fantastic dress, that its true features are scarcely discoverable. Not satisfied with such words as the Holy Ghost teacheth, human folly and presumption display themselves in endeavouring to recommend the Gospel by the enticing words of man's wisdom. A particular proneness to this mode of exhibiting divine truth, is probably a characteristic of the present age. It is an age of refinement, in which there prevails a general thirst for knowledge, and much attention is paid to the cultivation of the human mind. It is, moreover, to a considerable extent, fashionable among the cultivated portion of the world to pay some attention to the preaching of the Gospel. The motive by which such persons are influenced, it may be supposed, is intellectual entertainment or the

amusement of the fancy. To be popular with such hearers, it is necessary that the peculiar doctrines of the Gospel be brought forward cautiously, that those features of evangelical truth which are peculiarly obnoxious to the depraved taste be somewhat softened, and that so much of sound doctrine as may be taught be recommended by the enticing words of man's wisdom. And there is some danger that through a desire to please such a fastidious taste, the precious truths of the Gospel may be buried amidst figures of rhetoric, and words of "learned length and thundering sound."

In answer to a question which naturally presents itself, "Ought we not to endeavour, by the ornaments of language and decorations of style, to win the attention of cultivated minds?" he shows—1, That in presenting Gospel truth to the minds of men, every thing like low and vulgar language should be carefully avoided; 2, But that, in avoiding low and vulgar language, we must not run into the opposite extreme of expending our chief attention upon gaudy decorations of style.

Dr. Pressly next proceeds to show his students what course of study is best calculated to fit students for preaching the Gospel. He places the Bible in the front, and emphatically says, "Let the Bible itself be your constant companion." He then enforces the necessity of obtaining a thorough acquaintance with the Bible in the original languages, and dwells particularly on giving attention to the too-much neglected study of the Hebrew.

Among the aids for interpreting the Scriptures, he presses the advantages to be derived from the study of Natural History, Sacred Geography, and the manners, customs, and history of ancient nations, particularly of the Jews.

In pressing upon students the necessity of an accurate knowledge of CHURCH HISTORY, he shows what useful aid it affords "in determining what is the faith which was once delivered to the saints, and in confirming our attachment to it." We have here the following excellent remarks:—

From such an examination we will be led to the conclusion, that there are certain great doctrines, which have been held in every age and in every part of the globe, by those who have been distinguished for holiness of life, and active and intelligent zeal in the service of God. No matter how widely they may have been separated from each other, —no matter how much they may have differed from each other in their language, their customs, or the form of civil polity under which they have lived—no matter what may have been their external circumstances in the world, these doctrines have been the stay and the solace of their souls; they have been their joy in prosperity, their light in adversity, and their support in death. These doctrines, we cannot doubt, are the truth as it is in Jesus. And while we discover this general agreement among the truly pious in every age, in relation to

the great doctrines of the Gospel, and our attachment to them is thereby strengthened, we at the same time observe among these same individuals, some diversity of opinion with regard to other things of subordinate importance. We are thereby reminded of the imperfection of man in the present state, are taught impressively not to be high-minded, but to unite the spirit of modesty, meekness and forbearance, with earnestness in contending for the faith once delivered to the saints.

The last extract which our space allows us to make recommends particular attention to the study of SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY.

By Systematic Theology, I mean the doctrines of the Bible arranged in order, under appropriate heads and reduced to a system. The doctrines of the Gospel are not presented to us in a systematic form in the Scriptures, but are dispersed throughout the sacred volume, being sometimes introduced into historical narrative, sometimes embodied in facts, again exhibited in striking figures, and then in plain and simple declarations. And those teachers who have found it convenient to accommodate their theological views to the prevailing taste and yet wish to avoid the appearance of inconsistency in the different phases they assume; those teachers who have a desire to remain within the church, and yet propagate doctrines at variance with the faith of the church, have always been inimical to theological systems or creeds. In pursuing their zigzag courses, creeds have always been found to be vexatious obstacles in their way. Without now entering upon the defence of the principle involved in the adoption of a creed or written formulary of the docrines of the Bible, I would remark, in passing, that the experience of mankind has demonstrated the propriety of reducing the principles of every other science to a system. Accordingly, we have our systems of Logic, of Rhetoric, and of Philosophy. And why should we not apply the same principle of common sense to the study of the Bible? It is admitted on all hands, that there are certain doctrines taught in the Scriptures, and why should we not for our own convenience, and for the sake of having a clear and distinct view of them, arrange them in a connected and systematic order, expressed in unequivocal and intelligible language?

The doctrines which we, as a church, believe to be taught in the Sacred Scriptures, are exhibited in the Constitution of the Associate Reformed Church. It is taken for granted, that you are acquainted with these doctrines, and that from a conviction of their truth, you have adopted them; and that in offering yourselves, as candidates for the holy ministry, you are resolved, by the grace of God, that having believed you will teach them. It cannot be that any of you have offered yourselves to the service of the church, as those who are called to preach the Gospel, and yet have not settled in your own minds, what is the Gospel. I will not allow myself to suppose, that any of you are yet in search of your religion, or that you are undecided as to what system of religious faith you will embrace. It is hoped that you are experimentally acquainted with true religion, and that you have felt the power of divine truth upon your hearts. You have come here not expecting to be made acquainted with a new Gospel, or to learn new doctrines, but to be more thoroughly established in these truths which

you have already learned and believed, and to qualify yourselves for illustrating, confirming, and defending them. Examine these doctrines carefully by the touchstone of the Bible. In our Confession of Faith and Catechisms, you are furnished with a brief selection of proofs from Scripture in support of the various doctrines which are therein exhibited. Make yourselves perfectly familiar with these, and lay them up carefully in the storehouse of your memory, that you may be prepared on all occasions to say in support of the doctrines you hold and teach, THUS IT IS WRITTEN. There is no argument in defence of the truth so conclusive, and none which we have equal reason to expect that God will own and bless, as one furnished by an appropriate quotation from Scripture. Scrutinize with care the objections which are urged against these doctrines, and trace the tendency of the principles involved in these objections. A little examination will frequently conduct you to the conclusion, that the popular objections, which are now arrayed against the distinguishing doctrines maintained in our Standards, are substantially the same with those which were opposed to the doctrines taught by the Apostles of our Lord. For example. Against the doctrine taught by Paul on the subject of Justification, namely, that man is justified by grace, without the deeds of the law, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, the objector cried out, If this be so, then let us continue in sin that grace may abound. And what is this, but the objection now urged by men who, it may be, have never experienced the influence of justifying faith upon their own hearts, against the doctrine of our Standards, That man is justified not on the ground of personal merit, but by faith through the imputed righteousness of Jesus Christ? This doctrine, say they, is unfriendly to holiness of life, and has a tendency to encourage men to live in sin. *God forbid,* is our reply, *how shall we that are dead to sin, live any longer therein.*

That ministers of the Gospel should be men of learning, has been run down by Fanaticism with a vehemence of ridicule and invective, as if learning were hostile to the work of the Spirit of God; but such fanatical raving is now exploded with a universality of contempt which relieves us from the necessity of wasting upon it any formal refutation. Heretics have very generally decried creeds and systems of theology; not really because they were opposed to a creed or system of theology in itself considered, or else why have they a creed or system of their own? but because creeds and systems of orthodox divines and orthodox churches imposed the same vexatious obstacles in the way of the apostles of heresy, that walls and doors, and bars and locks, do to the designs of midnight plunderers, roaming in quest of prey. Skilled as ministers should be in systematic theology, in philosophy, and in the advancing literature of the age, they should not be behind in piety. All admit this. The minister, be he ever so accomplished, who is without piety, is a moral monster in the Church of God. When should we begin to look for this?

It is too late when the man is in the ministry. The candidate should bring it with him into the Divinity Hall. His entrance there implies that he *ought* to have it. Should not those who are charged to commit the ministry which they have received to faithful men, take pains and measures to ascertain this? Should they not try candidates on the evidences of their piety. Why not ascertain from themselves the operations of piety on their minds, as well as judge them by the fruits of their actions? All true piety has its foundation in regeneration. All candidates for the ministry should be judged whether they are regenerated men. Should we put the question to themselves? Some scout this idea. They say no man will give a bad account of himself. They tell us that it is a temptation to hypocrisy. They tell us, that it is just as absurd to ask a man, Are you a regenerated man? as to ask him, Are you an honest man? Let us examine this. Prayer is a mark of regeneration: and are we to be bound up from asking our students, Do you pray? Love to Christ, and to his cause and people, is a conclusive evidence of a renewed mind: is the question as to attachment to the Saviour and the Saviour's interests not to be put to our students? Faith is a fruit of grace, and the inward workings of faith is a subject of consciousness: and who will presume to say that we are not to ask, Do you profess to believe with all your heart upon the Lord Jesus Christ? We put such questions to candidates for communion; and why not put them to candidates for the ministry?

We speak not against the evidence of the life. We speak not against taking into view the estimate formed of character by those qualified to observe and judge. On the contrary, we insist on all this. But of experimental religion the individual himself (only) can give an account, and some account of this we insist on having.

LUTHER.

SABBATH SANCTIFICATION.

To the Editors of the Christian Freeman.

GENTLEMEN—You have at different times urged the public to petition Parliament, for amended laws to protect all classes in the divine right of enjoying the rest and the ordinances of the Sabbath, free from being bought or forced by their

fellow-men to violate the fourth commandment. So far as the Sabbath is concerned, this is civil and religious liberty. But, Gentlemen, what do you think of the propriety of getting up petitions on the Sabbath for Sabbath preservation? Is this becoming the Lord's day? Within these few weeks, different Presbyterian congregations have had petitions of this kind lying for signature, on the Sabbath, at the door of their meeting-houses; and in obedience to the direction of their ministers from the pulpit, have signed those petitions on their retiring from public worship. Is this practice in accordance with the sanctity and solemnities of the Sabbath? Is it not a direct violation of the Sabbath for which they profess such veneration themselves, and to guard which against the violation of others, they wish to obtain the enactment of further laws and penalties? Very likely, those congregations and ministers think themselves right in signing on the Sabbath, petitions to Parliament for Sabbath preservation. I do not dispute this; but that does not prove them to be right. I have heard it urged in defence of this practice, that the object is good. The object is undoubtedly good; but are we justified in doing evil, in any instance, that good may come? You, however, may call on me to prove, that signing petitions to Parliament on the Sabbath on behalf of the Sabbath is evil. Well, I undertake to prove that it is evil—a breach of the Sabbath. These petitions can be as well, and better, got up on week-days; but by obtaining the signatures on the Sabbath, the originators of these petitions save themselves the time and exertion of carrying round the petitions for signature through the week. The signing of such petitions on the Sabbath at places of public worship, directly leads the thoughts and conversation of the people away from the spiritualities of religion, and from the salvation of their souls, and is contrary to those heartfelt impressions which the faithful preaching of the Gospel should produce. The people are led to think and speak of civil matters on the Sabbath; and once they enter on these, do they not go on and on, till Sabbath and sermon, and Scripture and religion are left forgotten behind? There is but a step between petitioning Parliament on the Sabbath even on behalf of the Sabbath, and then entering on the subject of petitioning Parliament with respect to any thing else. Then the whole business of Parliament presents itself. Politics—the engrossing and endless theme of politics—comes sweeping in; and once our tongues get upon the chase of politics, even on

the Sabbath, farewell to all that we have been hearing about the Gospel.

If it be contended that it is proper to petition Parliament for this, as being a religious object, on the Sabbath, would not the same mode of reasoning go to justify the propriety of Parliament meeting on the Sabbath, to legislate in regard to this or any other religious object? This conclusion will, I suppose, appear rather startling to our Sabbath Parliament-petitioners. Why not petition Parliament, on the same plea, with regard to any benevolent object—such as the abolition of slavery, on the Sabbath? And on the same principle, why should not Parliament meet on the Sabbath to legislate for such objects? Once admit the principle, and there is no standing still.

There is another consideration. Multitudes put a very unfavourable construction on this signing of petitions to Parliament on the Lord's day for Sabbath legislation. I admit that many might probably be inclined to put an unfavourable construction on the petitioning Parliament in reference to the Sabbath at all. Be this as it may: many make an outcry of doing so on the Sabbath. We hear them use such language as this: "You high-flying professors of religion," say they, "are, after all, not very consistent. You profess great regard for the Sabbath, yet you violate the Sabbath. You wish others to keep it, yet you break it yourselves. You wish to get others prevented from breaking the Sabbath by the force of Parliamentary laws, and yet you yourselves, in seeking to gain this object, do not scruple to trample under foot the fourth commandment of the law of your God. You petition Parliament to enact laws to protect the Sabbath, and yet you yourselves profane the Sabbath by signing petitions to Parliament on the Sabbath. Where is your religion? Where is your consistency?" Such, Gentlemen, is the language of not a few. In this way, the mouths of a censorious world are opened; and charges of hypocrisy, Pharasaism, and being actuated by mere political motives, have been lavishly poured not only on persons who might possibly deserve such charges, but on the most upright and single-minded men, as well as the Pharasaic and hollow. You may say, Gentlemen, and others may say, "What about the world? Who can stop censorious tongues?" It is true, we cannot stop censorious tongues; nor are we to make them the regulators of our conduct. But, at the same time, we are to avoid giving any just cause of blame,

any just ground of censure, even to the malignant tongues of the world. What is the rule of Scripture? Let our Sabbath Parliamentary-petitioners, even for so good an object as Sabbath preservation, ponder it. "Let not your good be evil spoken of"—"Avoid all appearance of evil."

As I am on this subject, I have to remark, that it is not only upon the subject of the Sabbath, but on questions entirely political—questions involving the fierce and fiery agitation of party politics—that certain congregations have, for many years past, been in the practice of signing petitions to Parliament at their places of worship on the Lord's day; and this both in the Established Church and among Dissenters. I well know the grief that this has caused to some. But what could they do? Rectors of the Established Church have great influence. Godless and tyrant landlords are omnipotent with their rack-rented and starving tenantry. And the influence of certain political parties, was powerful all over the community. Hence the Sabbath was violated, and many places of worship were desecrated by the getting up of petitions to Parliament on political and party questions on the Lord's day; and all this was done by persons making high professions of religious purity and zeal, and professing great horror for the breach of the Sabbath common in the South and West of Ireland, and for those political meetings and speechifications on the Sabbath by which political agitation has been for years carried on by the Roman Catholic leaders.

Another hint, and I have done. Should not those who sign petitions to Parliament for Sabbath preservation, see to it particularly that they themselves keep the Sabbath? This is undeniable. And yet how common is it to find those very persons outraging all religion and all consistency, by travelling, visiting, and jaunting on the Sabbath! Are there not to be found those who, after signing, on the Lord's day at their place of worship, a petition to Parliament for laws to punish the violators of the Sabbath, yet in the evening saunter about the public walks, visit their friends, or are off to some place of fashionable resort? No wonder that infidelity abounds! No wonder that the professors of religion are so much attacked and exposed! No wonder their public acts are often exposed to suspicion and misrepresentation! But let not any of us be ready in casting the stone at others, while we are ourselves far from being without sin. Which of us keeps the Sabbath as we should? Which of us is so cautious as we ought, lest our

conduct on the Sabbath should lead others to treat it with increasing irreverence?

LUTHER.

May 28th, 1836.

TO WHOM DOES THE PROMISE, "KINGS SHALL BE NURSING-FATHERS," APPLY?

"Kings shall be thy nursing-fathers, and their queens thy nursing-mothers."—Isaiah xlix. 23.

To the Editors of the Christian Freeman.

GENTLEMEN—For ages it has been generally supposed that this passage applies to the Christian church, and to the Christian church established among us Gentiles as distinguished from the Jews. So much is this the case, that this application of the passage is acceded to by those who have been exercising their utmost powers and ingenuity in pulling down Established churches, as well as those who stand on the opposite side. The many things that have been said on both sides, with regard to the interpretation of this passage, have called my attention to it; and the result of my reflections upon it is, that Voluntaries and Compulsories, as they contemptuously nickname each other, are both wrong, and the universal and hereditary interpretation of this text, is a universal and hereditary misrepresentation.

This passage, together with parallel texts, are addressed to the Jews. They had a primary reference to what was done for that people in their captivity, by Darius, Cyrus, Artaxerxes, and Ahasuerus; and they will have their complete fulfilment, when Christian and Gentile princes and their people shall help the Jews, by their fleets, armies, and treasures, to return, as in the days of old, and establish themselves in their own land. Let any honest-minded reader take the above prophecy, "Kings shall be thy nursing-fathers," and let him read it in connexion with the context where it lies, and let him forget for a moment that ever there was an interpretation put upon the passage, or any controversy about it, and I am convinced that his mind will acquiesce in the conviction of the truth of my conclusion, that the passage refers to the settlement of the Jews in their own land, in the latter day; and that it is a prediction of what Gentile princes and Gentile people will do for the Jews in

helping their restoration, as in the days of Cyrus and Artaxerxes.

Let my reader begin with me at the fourteenth verse, "But *Zion* said, The Lord hath forsaken me." What Zion? The literal Zion—the Jews. To this Zion read the promise of the nineteenth verse. "Thy waste and thy desolate places, and the land of thy destruction shall even now be too narrow, by reason of the inhabitants, and they that swallowed thee up shall be far away." This passage applies most certainly not to us, but to the Jews, whose land has lain long waste and desolate, but which shall, on their restoration, be yet filled to overflowing with a population of the seed of Israel. The Jewish people, be it borne in mind, and not the Gentiles, are the persons here all along addressed, and to whom the promise is made. In the twenty-second verse, the Lord goes on to declare what the Gentiles, naming them by name, will do in bringing back the sons and daughters of exiled Israel. "Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I will lift up mine hand to the *Gentiles*, and set my standard to the people; and *they* shall bring thy sons in their arms, and *thy* daughters shall be carried on their shoulders." Then follows the passage under review, "And kings shall be *thy* nursing-fathers, and their queens *thy* nursing-mothers; *they* shall bow down *to thee*, with their face toward the earth, and lick up the dust of *thy* feet." *Thy* nursing-fathers.—Nursing-fathers to whom? To the Jews, doubtless; the Jews as distinguished from the Gentiles. Gentile kings, and their queens, and nobles, and people, will do all this for the Jews. Formerly Gentile princes, nobles, and nations despised the Jews; the day is coming when they will honour the Jews. Formerly they hated the Jews; they will yet come to reverence and love the Jews. Formerly they persecuted the Jews; they will yet help the Jews. Formerly they plundered the Jews; they will yet enrich the Jews. Formerly they drove them from their own land; they will yet carry them back to their own land.

There is a parallel passage which we are in the habit of viewing as mystical, and applying to ourselves. The passage has nothing mystical about it, but is to be viewed literally as it lies before us, and applied to the Jewish people. It is contained in the sixtieth chapter of Isaiah; and if our minds were not blinded by an habitual and hereditary mystical misinterpretation of the passage, we would at once, without difficulty and without hesitation, apply it to the Jews, and to their final restoration to their own land, and to the agency of the Gentiles in

helping them to return. "Who are these that fly as a cloud, and as doves to their windows? Surely the *isles* shall wait for *thee* (Israel) and the *ships of Tarshish* first, to *bring* THY *sons from far, their silver and their gold* with them unto the name of the Lord thy God. And *the sons of strangers* shall *build* up THY *walls*, and THEIR *kings shall minister unto* THEE; for in my wrath I *smote thee*, but in my favour have I had mercy on thee. Therefore thy gates shall be open continually, they shall not be shut by day nor night, that men may bring unto thee the *forces of the Gentiles*, and that their kings may be brought. For the *nation* and *kingdom* that will not serve *thee* (Israel) shall perish; yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted. The *sons of them that afflicted thee* shall come bending unto thee, and all they that despise thee shall bow themselves down at the soles of thy feet; and they shall call thee the city of the Lord, the Zion of the Holy One of Israel. *Thou* (the Jewish nation) shalt also suck the milk of the *Gentiles*, and shalt suck the breast of *kings;* and thou shalt know that I the Lord am thy Saviour and thy Redeemer, the mighty one of Jacob." Now I confidently ask any one whose mind is open to conviction, and not unfitted for judging fairly, by mystical interpretation or by polemical prejudice, is it not as clear as the sun at noon-day, that all this applies to the Jews, and not to us?

I know many will immediately cry out, "Who are you to set up your mind against the united voice of commentators and preachers for ages?" This is not the question. The question is, as to the application of these passages, do they apply to the Jews or not? I say to the Jews, and let any one confute me who can.

This application of the passage I know will level to the dust much criticism and laborious ingenuity. The cry of, Alas! alas! will be raised over many a declamation from page and pulpit. But, whoever may suffer, let truth be victorious.

I know what a host of antagonists the publication of this will raise up against me. It is no man's real interest to be in any error; therefore, if I be wrong, I entreat, for my own sake, and that of the public, that some of your correspondents will clear up the matter through your pages. But I entreat any opponent who may come forward, not to call me hard names, or give me bad language. This is not a good way to convince the understanding; and if it does not succeed in correcting an error, it is an infallible proof of a bad spirit.

Some may resent, and others rejoice in this view of the

application of the passage, "Kings shall be thy nursing-fathers," as favouring a popular doctrine, that in no case should a Government grant money out of the public funds towards the support of the institutions of religion. I am not, however, of that school which maintains this doctrine. I hold the contrary; though no one execrates with more enthusiastic indignation than I do, the oppressions and the iniquities which corrupt Governments and corrupt churches have perpetrated in the application of the principle. I am your's,

LUTHER.

REMARKABLE EXAMPLE OF PATIENT PERSEVERANCE, AND OF PROTESTANT HEROISM.

BERNARD DE PALISSY, a poor Frenchman, entirely dependent for support on his own industry, had put into his hands by accident an enamelled cup, and having been seized with a desire of improving the art, he relinquished all other occupations, and gave up his whole time, mind, and substance, to the prosecution of experiments on the composition of enamel. He has himself given a narrative of his labours, sacrifices, and sufferings during the progress of his pursuit, which is intensely interesting. In this account, Palissy represents himself as alternately planning and building, demolishing and rebuilding his furnace, at every step buoyed up by hope, and as often met, but not subdued, by disappointment; the object of remonstrance and derision to his associates, subject to the expostulations of his wife, and witness to the silent but more eloquent reproaches of his children. In other respects Palissy proved himself an amiable, as well as a highly-gifted man; for, notwithstanding that his efforts were ultimately crowned with success, that standard whereby the judgment of mankind is most easily, and therefore most usually formed, one might hesitate to applaud a degree of perseverance which for so long a time materially interfered with the welfare of his family. Amidst all this scene of deprivation and disappointment, Palissy bore outwardly a cheerful countenance, and throughout the lengthened trial, confined within the dungeon of his own breast those feelings of bitterness which he so forcibly described as being his portion. The extremities to which he was at one time reduced, were such, that to provide fuel for feeding the furnace, his furniture, and afterwards even some of the wood work of his dwelling were destroyed, and in order to silence the clamour of

his assistant workmen for the payment of wages, he stripped himself of a portion of apparel. At length, however, these efforts were rewarded by complete success, and fame, honours, and independence were thenceforward his attendants through a long career of useful occupation.

Nor did the firmness of his character forsake him for a moment to the end of his life. Being a Protestant, and having ventured in some of his lectures, to promulgate facts which made against the dogmas of the priests, he was, when in his ninetieth year, dragged by the infuriate zeal of these fanatics to the Bastile, and died, with consistent firmness, within its walls. His heroic reply, while thus imprisoned, to Henry III. is above all praise. "My good man," said the King, "if you cannot conform yourself on the matter of religion, I shall be compelled to leave you in the hands of my enemies." "Sire," replied the intrepid old man, "I was already willing to surrender my life, and could any regret have accompanied the action, it must assuredly have vanished upon hearing the great king of France say, 'I am compelled.' This, Sire, is the condition to which those who force you to act contrary to your own good disposition, can never reduce me; because I am prepared for death, and because your whole people have not the power to compel a simple potter to bend his knee before images which he has made."

THE ATONEMENT.

To the Editors of the Christian Freeman.

THE necessity of an atonement orginates in offence being committed and punishment incurred. Atonement is such satisfaction for the offence committed as shall fully satisfy the person offended, so that on the ground of that satisfaction he shall forgive the offender, and release him from the punishment deserved.

Man is an offender against God. We have violated the good and holy law given us as the rule of our duty and the pledge of our happiness. In consequence of disobedience, we have exposed ourselves to the displeasure of the great Judge, and to the punishment denounced by the law against transgression.

In no way can we be saved from the penal consequences of transgression, but on the foundation of an atonement. The

law must be vindicated. Justice must be satisfied. The rights of the Divine Government must be maintained. And this can be accomplished only by the punishment of the sinner, or by an atonement for his guilt. If the sinner be punished, there is no room for atonement; if atonement be made, a foundation is laid for pardon.

The atonement is altogether an arrangement of God and the pure offspring of grace. The sinner is in the hands of his Judge, and it is at his option to pardon or to punish. Should God determine to punish all, no impeachment could lie against either his justice or his goodness. To pardon any—to pardon even one, is the act of free and sovereign mercy. Pardon, we have seen, must be based upon atonement. Mercy must proceed on the satisfaction of law and justice; and the throne of grace can be erected only on principles which vindicate the perfections of God, and maintain the rights of his moral government. Atonement itself, as well as pardon, is the result of his contrivance and grace. It is no proposition of man; it is no suggestion of angels; it is the offspring of the divine mind; it bears upon it the evident impress of the wisdom and policy of God; it was his purpose before the foundation of the world; and when man became a sinner, this contrivance of wonderful mercy, not then for the first created for the occasion, but ready provided by the determinate council and foreknowledge of God, was called into immediate operation. I say contrivance of mercy; for the atonement is not the cause of mercy, but the result of it. It is the grandest display of Jehovah's clemency and grace which the universe ever beheld—the most signal provision and commendation of his love. God commendeth his love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

If Atonement be not within the power of the offending party personally, it can be made only vicariously by the substitution of another in the room of the transgressor. Man can make no atonement for his guilt. The law of God is of unceasing and unbending obligation. It demands every moment of our existence perfect obedience. It demands perfect obedience under pain of condemnation; and being the perfect law of a God infinite in moral excellence, it can require nothing less. Now, is it not the fact that the sinner is unable to meet this claim of perfect obedience? Is it not the fact that the saint is not in this life perfect in holiness, and consequently

that he is unable to meet the demand of the law? Even were we now restored to the moral perfection of heaven, is not perfect obedience due by us every moment for the present, and consequently even perfect obedience for the present could constitute no satisfaction for past transgression? As soon as man became a transgressor he forfeited the divine favour for ever. That moment he deserved everlasting punishment. As long as he continues in this state, he at once lives under the dominion of sin, and lies under the burden of the curse. All that he does in this state, must partake both of his sinfulness and condemnation. Hell is a place of eternal sinning as well as eternal suffering. The sinning and the suffering, instead of ceasing and wearing themselves out, go on becoming constantly more aggravated and desperate; and the accumulation of ages, is but an accumulation of rebellion and of punishment. In point of fact, then, can the sinner by any amount of doing or of suffering on his part, make any atonement for his guilt? It is clear to a demonstration that he can not.

As man can make no atonement for himself, it is evident that atonement can only be made by the intervention of another. And who shall be qualified to interpose between the sinner and the Judge, and bear the stroke of penal justice? Who shall become the substitute of man, and render vicarious atonement? Who shall devote himself for man, and become an offering and a sacrifice? He who shall do so must possess certain requisite qualifications. He must bear the commission of Jehovah—Jehovah is the offended party, and it is his to originate, and his to accept atonement. He who will make atonement, must be one originally under no law to God; for he who is under law to God, all his obedience is due for himself, and, therefore, the merit of it totally unavailing to satisfy for the delinquency of another. To pay the penalty and endure the punishment due to the sinner, must be purely voluntary on the part of the substitute, as well as authorised of God. If it have not the stamp of the divine sanction, it cannot meet with his acceptance; and if it be not voluntary on the part of the substitute, it must be equally unavailing, because possessing no moral worth. He who will make atonement must have the nature of man, for it was man that sinned; he must have a divine nature, else he shall be unable to treat on equal terms with God the Judge; and the reconciliation that he shall make must be of such worth as shall be proportioned to the infinite demerit of man's guilt, and the infinite dignity of the great King of the universe, against whom the high treason has

been perpetrated. To release the delinquent with an atonement, or such an atonement as shall amply vindicate the divine perfections, is a moral impossibility. The atonement that God provides and that God accepts, as the foundation on which to erect his throne of grace, and on which to justify the ungodly, must demonstrate God's uncompromising hostility against sin, his strict justice in punishing transgression as well as rewarding obedience, his inviolable veracity in making good his word of threatening as well as his word of promise, his goodness in protecting the unfallen portion of his rational creation from imitating the example of man's rebellion, in a word, his rights and claims as Legislator and moral Governor of the universe, lest that his character should cease to inspire veneration, and lest his administration should cease to appear firm, honourable, and efficacious in the estimate of his rational and moral creation.

In whom do these indispensable requisites centre but in the eternal Son of God? Combining in himself the nature of God and the nature of man, he is the representative of man with God, and the representative of God with man; and so qualified to make reconciliation. One in deity with the Father, he was originally above the law; but by his incarnation, he was made under the law, and became obedient to it—in its precept and in its penalty—that he might redeem us from its curse, and procure for us its reward. His substitution of himself was altogether voluntary: he had what no created being has, the right of self-disposal: he had power to lay down his life; and in taking on himself to bear the punishment due to guilty man, he acted with perfect willingness—he was conscious of possessing every qualification, and was animated by a generosity and grace without parallel and beyond conception. Nor are we to suppose that the mediation and atonement of the Son of God, wrung from the Father a reluctant reconciliation. There was no reluctance, no hesitation on his part. The scheme of mediation and atonement not only had his approbation and consent, but was the offspring of his contrivance and grace. Father, Son, and Holy Spirit indeed co-operate, and the plan of redemption is the result of the eternal council and covenant of grace. The atonement which the Son of God offers in our nature, must, from the essential dignity of him who offered it, be fully adequate to expiate the exceeding vastness of human guilt, and to propitiate the offended Majesty of Heaven. On the foundation of Christ's atonement, the sinner is saved not by abolishing, not by softening down in the slightest degree the law that condemns him, but by a method which ever-

lastingly vindicates, establishes, and honours the law. The sinner is exempted from eternal punishment, not by any act of indulgence passed in favour of transgression, nor by any mitigation of the penalty, but in a way which demonstrates in the face of the universe that God's mercy is not weakness or indulgence; that the rights of justice cannot be invaded with impunity; that having *said* that he will punish, he will by no means clear the guilty; and that, so far from encouragement being given to disobedience, the divine character is set forth in an attitude more awfully venerable, and sin exhibited in characters of more intense odiousness, baseness, vileness, criminality, and horror, than is in any other way conceivably possible.

In the atonement of our Lord Jesus Christ we have not only a most signal display of the divine perfections singly and separately considered, but a glorious exhibition of the divine perfections acting together in harmony and concert. What an awful display does the atonement exhibit of the holiness and justice of God! What a bright and glorious disclosure does it afford of his love and mercy! And how does it satisfy the demands of justice, and yet give free scope to the promptings of clemency and grace! Infinite justice and infinite love are reconciled. God is a just God, and yet a Saviour—just, and yet the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus. Mercy and truth meet together; righteousness and peace kiss each other.

On the ground of the atonement of Christ Jesus only, can we expect pardon in any way consistent with the honour of the divine perfections. But, blessed be God, that on this atonement we can both rest our souls with perfect confidence of safety, and please and glorify in the highest manner our heavenly Father. The atonement of Christ is the meeting-ground of God and man. Not to embrace this atonement is the most criminal act of rebellion of which we can be guilty. To embrace it lies at the very foundation of all evangelical obedience. To embrace it secures our salvation. To reject seals our condemnation. If then we would at once please God, honour the Saviour, and save our souls, let us believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and "with joy receive his atonement."

June, 1836. LUTHER.

THE CASE OF CORNELIUS.

ACTS X.

SOME seem to think that the Heathen are well enough without the Gospel; and as we have a religion of our own, so we should leave them to theirs. The diversities of Judaism, Paganism, Mahometanism, and Christianity, they regard as so many different avenues conducting erring mortals to one common Father, and one common heaven. Such persons do not know Christianity. The plan of redemption, the sinfulness of human nature, the inefficacy of works to constitute a ground of acceptance, and the necessity of the new birth of the soul to righteousness, are either discredited or misunderstood by them. In defence of their views, they commonly urge the case of Cornelius, and remind us of what Peter said to him, "Of a truth, I perceive that God is no respecter of persons, but, in every nation, he that feareth him and worketh righteousness is accepted of him."

What, however, does this text prove? It proves, certainly, that whatever be our prejudices or dislike—whoever, in any nation or in any corner of the world, fears God and works righteousness, is one whom God loves, and God accepts, though man may hate and condemn. But does it prove that every nation and religion under heaven, whether Pagan or Mahometan, must necessarily be able to produce such men as Cornelius, fearing God and working righteousness? The text says no such thing: it contains no statement on the subject. Does this passage say that the Heathen are safe enough and well enough without the Gospel? Does it give any countenance to such a notion? By no means. What madmen would Peter, Paul, and all the other preachers of the cross have been, to have forsaken every thing, and have spent their lives, in spite of hardship, persecution, and martyrdom, to propagate the Gospel among Heathen nations, if Heathen nations were safe and well without it, and if Heathenism was efficacious to the production of men "fearing God, working righteousness, and accepted with him?"

To understand the matter aright, let us first take a view of Peter, and then of Cornelius.

Peter's mind had been full of Jewish prejudice and exclusiveness. Though Christ had commanded repentance and remission of sins to be preached to all nations, yet so strong was the prin-

ciple of Jewish exclusion in the mind of Peter, that an express revelation from heaven had to be made to him, in order to bring him to open the door of the church to the Gentiles. An angel directs Cornelius to send for Peter. Peter has a vision, and the Spirit directs him to go with the messengers. He comes. He hears the account which Cornelius gives of himself and of his vision. His Jewish prejudices are forced to give way. He applies the keys of the kingdom of heaven committed to him; he opens the gate of the church hitherto closed against the Gentiles; and, lo, Cornelius enters as the first-fruits of the Gentile harvest. The change was not more new to Cornelius, than was the light which broke in on Peter's mind, new and wonderful to him. His address to Cornelius shews this. "Then Peter opened his mouth and said, I perceive that God is no respecter of persons; but in every nation, he that feareth him and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him."

Let us now look at Cornelius. Some are apt to think of Cornelius, that before Peter came to him he was a heathen—a bad man—wholly ignorant of true religion. This is not the fact. Cornelius was a Roman officer; he was a Gentile; and had at one time of his life perhaps been an idolater. But he was no idolater now. He was not now a bad man. He was the reverse. He knew and worshipped God. What is the character given of him? "He was a devout man; one that feared God with all his house, who gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God alway." What does the angel say to him? "Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God." Before Peter came to him at all, Cornelius was a religious man—a good man—one who was in a state of grace. He was possessed of justification; for Peter says that he was accepted with God. He was possessed of sanctification; for he feared God and wrought righteousness; he gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God always. He was possessed of saving faith; for he pleased God; and without faith it is impossible to please him. Cornelius had likely been well acquainted with the Scriptures of the Old Testament; he knew the meaning of sacrifices, and believed in the Messiah. From his public situation as an officer in Judea, he must have known of Jesus Christ. We are sure that he heard of salvation through Christ, though he was the first Gentile to whom it was preached, or who was admitted into the church. We are sure of this, because Peter in his address says so. "The word which God sent unto the

children of Israel, *preaching peace by Jesus Christ* (he is Lord of all) *that word* I say ye *know*, which was published throughout all Judea, and began after the baptism which John preached."

What countenance, then, does the case of Cornelius, who was a devout man, a good man, a justified man—a man acquainted with the true God, and a believer in the Saviour according to his opportunity—give to those who think Heathen idolaters and workers of wickedness, without God and without Christ, are safe, and well enough in the religion of their country and of their fathers?

Whether there be now among the heathen any who have some knowledge of God, and may be accepted of him, it is not necessary to our present purpose to discuss. Britain and America command intercourse with the remotest nations: the Scriptures are circulated in a vast number of languages: tracts are strewed like leaves over all the world: missionaries are preaching salvation to the ends of the earth; and who can tell how many, even amid dense masses of surrounding heathenism, who have no opportunity of visibly uniting themselves with any organized Church of Christ, may yet, through the Spirit of grace, know Christ, fear God, work righteousness, and be accepted?

LUTHER.

INFLUENCE.

[SELECTED.]

"Evil or good, thy name shall live hereafter!"

IN discussing the subject of that *Influence* which we exert upon each other, it seems natural to consider, in the first place, the *facility and power* with which this influence is exerted; and then, the *extent of its operation*, and the *length of its continuance*.

Our *facilities* for exerting an influence on the characters of each other are so many and great, that it is difficult to conceive how two persons can meet and converse together, without exerting a mutual influence. Such a thing seems to be impossible. And every man who examines critically his intellectual and moral state, will observe, that however short his interview with another person may be, it has had an effect upon him; and that every thing which he notices in the manners, conversation, and actions of others, and in the circum-

stances of their condition and style of their living, affects, in some degree, his conduct, and changes, in some degree, his character. Hence it is, that human conduct is seldom stable, that human character is seldom stationary. The patrician acts upon the plebeian, and the plebeian upon the patrician; and the different members of the same class act upon each other. Every meeting, every conversation, every instance of opposition or co-operation in the pursuit of pleasure or business, gives rise to a mutual sympathy of feeling, and to an action and re-action, which produce changes of some kind in the state and character of the immortal mind.

And this influence is usually exerted when we think little about it. We sit down by the fire-side with our families; we meet in the social circle with our friends; we call upon an acquaintance; we transact business with a stranger; or we go up to the house of GOD;—and all is soon forgotten. But we have probably left impressions on some minds, which will never be erased. Nor can any care, forethought, labour, or ingenuity of ours prevent this. The nature of the human mind, and the economy of human society must first be changed.

And this influence, which is exerted with so much facility and constancy, has often great *power*. It often produces very important results. A single brief interview may give such a bias and direction to the mind, as will lead to a radical and permanent change in the character and conduct. A single instance of advice, reproof, caution, or encouragement, may decide the question of a man's respectability, usefulness, and happiness in the world.

Such great events may result from single acts. As some of the acts of almost every individual, do probably exert such an influence on some child, domestic, or intimate associate.

But if we would gain a correct view of a man's influence during his earthly existence, we must not confine ourselves to detached portions of that influence. We must survey the aggregate effects of all his actions. We must look, not at the streams as they move separately through a thousand vallies, but at those streams when united in one broad and deep channel, and rolling along, a mighty resistless flood.

Now, how numberless are the overt acts of a life of twenty, thirty, forty, or sixty years! How they fill the whole track of our earthly pilgrimage! How, like a vast army, they stand up in thick array! And though their individual strength be small, yet how immense the united energy of the whole great phalanx.

Thus much may be said concerning the *facility* and *power*, with which men exert a direct and present influence on their fellow-men. Let us now take into view that which is indirect and future, and endeavour to enlarge our apprehensions, so as to survey the *extent of its operation*, and the *length of its continuance*.

The influence of men is not to be confined to the circle of their acquaintance. It spreads on every side of them, like the undulations of the smitten water, and will reach those whom they never saw. They cannot confine it to their state or country. It will spread into other states, and other countries. For it will not die when they die; but it is a legacy, which all bequeath to succeeding generations: and it will exist, and act, and enlarge its sphere of operation, for ages and ages to come!

We feel the effects of what was done by ABRAHAM, MOSES, DAVID, ALEXANDER, and CÆSAR—men who lived and acted in a distant country, and twenty, thirty, forty centuries ago! And generations a hundred ages hence, and in a hundred different lands, may feel the effects of our actions! Yes, that influence which is now comparatively feeble and limited, may, in some distant age, have attained to a greatness and territorial extent, of which we have now no conception.

For an illustration of this, consider the case of CLAUDIUS BUCHANAN, the author of the "Christian Researches in Asia," and a great promoter of benevolent enterprises. When BUCHANAN was a child, his influence was like that of other children. It was limited. When he embarked for India, it was still limited. But on his return from India thence, it acted on a large portion of the British Empire. At his death, the sphere of its operation was still wider. Multitudes, in this western world, then felt its awakening energy. It has survived his dissolution; and has been spreading ever since. It has identified itself with that of most of the charitable institutions of the day. And it will continue to enlarge its sphere, till, in some remote period, it may act on the vast population of the globe.

The same may be said of St. PAUL, of LUTHER, and many others. They are dead, and their bodies have crumbled into dust; but their influence lives, and is daily extending.

And, though our influence may be less powerful, than was theirs when alive; and though it may enlarge the sphere of its operation less rapidly; yet it may last as long, and act as really, and come at length, to the same universality. Nor will it alter the case materially, if our names are known but a little way from our homes, and are soon forgotten by all the world.

After having illustrated my subject, I cannot forbear making one or two reflections, which naturally rise from the illustration.

1. Of how great importance is this power of exerting an influence upon others! It is a talent of prodigious value. Even were it to last only during this short life, yet, with such facility, and constancy, and energy is it exerted, that it would, even then, be of vast moment. But we have seen that it will survive us and our generation; that it is a bequest, which, whether rich or poor, we must all make to future ages.

Upon the Rulers of the people, and the Ministers of the Gospel, a thousand eyes are fixed; to them a thousand ears are listening. They act directly, and with great force, upon a multitude of families at once; and their influence, whether good or bad, will be transmitted through many channels, and into numberless places, and through countless ages.

But no private station can render this talent unimportant. No retirement can destroy it. The prisoner in the dungeon, cut off from intercourse with all but his keeper, exerts an influence on him, and he on others, and they on a thousand more.

The mothers of SAMUEL and TIMOTHY, of DODDRIDGE, DWIGHT and NEWTON, in the secrecy of domestic retirement, unobserved by the world, taught their little ones the great truths of the Bible. They could have had no suspicion how important were their labours. But the event has shown, that they were kindling a flame, the benign radiance of which was to extend to other ages, and over a great part of the world.

"Great effects often result from little causes." The "widow's mite" may touch some secret spring, on which depends, in the providence of GOD, a series of events, destined ultimately to pour light from heaven upon a thousand or a million souls. It may be the first in a series (perhaps a long series) of causes, that shall result in the conversion of a sinner, the salvation of a soul from death, and the raising up of some great promoter of true piety, whose praise, like that of LATIMER or LEIGHTON, shall be in all the churches for a great while to come.

O had they, who contribute of their property or labour for the propagation of the Gospel, an eye like GOD's to see the end from the beginning; and a mind like his, to comprehend the relations and tendencies, and the remote and ever-growing consequences, of benevolent deeds;—there would be a motive to perseverance, which would act upon them constantly, delightfully, and irresistibly.

2. How solemn is a residence in this world! Whatever we do or say in the sight or hearing of others, we are always liable to be producing changes in somebody, which will take hold on the judgment of the great day, and be felt for ever! And such an influence is even now abroad; and is acting, beyond our control, upon relatives, and friends, and acquaintances, and upon multitudes whom we never saw. And it has taken such a strong hold upon the world, that the stroke which lays us silent in the tomb will not materially affect it. It will exist in youthful vigour; and fly from man to man, and from kingdom to kingdom, and from generation to generation; and, from far distant ages, may lift up its voice, like a spirit of darkness, or an angel of glory!

If such be our situation here, what shall we do? Obey the Divine Law. Let that be the rule of your life. Employ your money, and labours, and prayers, with a view to it. Then will you leave behind you a fountain of good, the streams of which will be perennial; the source of joy, and perhaps of salvation, to thousands in succeeding ages.

And who is there that would not desire, if ever admitted to the world of glory, there to welcome, from age to age, immortal souls, who will ascribe their salvation to the blessing of God on his influence? Who is there, that would enter heaven, and through the vast regions of bliss, and through countless ages, never find one happy soul, who was saved through his instrumentality? If there be any such distinction in that blissful world, as that of riches and poverty, such a one must be accounted poor indeed. He has, it is true, escaped the dangers of this tempestuous ocean; but, like some shipwrecked mariner, he has escaped with nothing but his life.

DIVINE CONTRIVANCE IN THE USE OF ATMOSPHERIC PRESSURE.

"How wonderful are thy works, O Lord! in wisdom hast thou made them all."

The air, though invisible, is a powerful agent. It presses with a weight of between fourteen and fifteen pounds on every square inch. On the hand there is a pressure downwards of 250 pounds; but as the air presses equally upwards and around, we are not sensible of the immense weight of air on the

hand, or on the body. Round our bodies and round the earth, we therefore perceive, there is a pressure of circumambient air amounting to the weight of nearly fifteen pounds on every square inch of the surface. If the air be removed from below, the whole pressure from above acts downward. If we place our hand on the mouth of a vessel from which the air has been exhausted, we instantly find the hand drawn violently inwards: this is caused by the weight of the air forcing the hand into the empty space below. It is found by experiment that if the air be taken out of a tube, the weight of the air without will force water to rise to the height of thirty-two feet, that body of water being equal to the weight of the atmosphere. The weight of the air which presses up the water, is equal to the weight of a pillar of water thirty-two feet high. It is on this principle we see how water is raised by means of a pump. The working of the handle excludes the air out of a long tube or barrel: the weight of the air outside this forces the water to ascend thirty-two feet; and the water gushes forth. On the same principle it is that quicksilver rises in the barometer twenty-nine inches, that being equal to thirty-two feet of water. Hence, too, the motion of the steam-engine; the piston of which is pressed downwards by the weight of the atmosphere from above, all air being removed below it, by first filling it with steam, and then suddenly cooling and converting that steam into water.

When the air is pumped out of any vessel it is deprived of the inward power which resists the pressure of the air on the outside. The sides of the vessel are, therefore, pressed inwards with violence. A flat glass would thus be broken unless it were thick; a round one, having the strength of an arch, would resist better; but any soft substance, as leather or skin, would be pressed together. If the air were removed slowly, the pressing would be gradual, or if it were only half taken out, the skin would only be partly pressed together. This is the very process by which *bees* reach the fine dust and juices of hollow flowers which are too narrow for them to enter. They fill up the mouth of the flower with their bodies and suck out the air; this makes the soft sides of the flower close, and presses the dust and juice towards the insect.

The air acts with a weight of nearly fifteen pounds on every square inch. If we could entirely exclude the air from between our hands, they would cling together with a force double this weight, because the air would press upon both hands. If we could contrive entirely to remove the air between one

hand and the wall, the hand would stick fast to the wall, being pressed on it with the pressure of above two hundred weight, that is, nearly fifteen pounds on every square inch of the hand. By a late curious discovery of Sir Everard Home, the anatomist, it is found that this is the very process by which FLIES, and other insects, are enabled to walk up perpendicular surfaces, however smooth, as the sides of walls and panes of glass in windows, and to walk as easily along the ceiling of a room with their bodies downwards and their feet up. Their feet, when examined by a microscope, are found to have flat skins or flaps, like the feet of web-footed animals, as ducks and geese; and they have, towards the back part or heel, but inside the skin or flap, two very small toes so connected with the flap as to draw it close down upon the glass or wall the fly walks on, and to shut out the air completely, so that there is a vacuum made between the foot and the glass or wall. The consequence of this is, that the air presses the foot on the wall with a very considerable force compared to the weight of the fly; and it can move easily by help of the vacuum made under its feet. If it were possible that we could make a vacuum in the same manner, we could support on the ceiling by a single hand, more than our whole weight, namely, a weight of fifteen stones. Some of the larger sea animals are by the same construction, enabled to climb the perpendicular and smooth surfaces of ice hills. In the large feet of these animals the contrivance is easily observed, of the two toes or tightners, by which the skin of the foot is pinned down, and the air excluded in the act of walking or climbing. But it is the very same, upon a large scale, with the mechanism of a fly's foot; and the climbing of the sea horse up the perpendicular ice, and the creeping of the fly on the window or ceiling, are performed by the same power, namely, the weight of the atmosphere;—the same power which causes the quicksilver to stand in the weather-glass, the water to ascend in the pump, the wind to whistle through a key-hole, and the piston to descend in a steam-engine.

PAUL'S ACCOUNT OF FAITH.

"FAITH is the substance of things hoped for; the evidence of things not seen."—HEBREWS xi. 1.

WHAT wonderful things are ascribed to faith! It lies at the foundation of all piety. It is the root of every other Christian grace. What the senses are to inform and guide the

body with regard to the affairs of life, faith is to inform and guide the soul with regard to the interests of eternity. Faith pentrates into the unseen world: it assures us of the realities that are there, makes them, though distant, invisible and future, present to our minds, and causes them to exert a powerful and predominating influence over our convictions, desires and conduct.

What were all that awakens our interests and our hopes in regard to the other world without faith? Our faith, or our unbelief, does not, indeed, alter the reality of things. Did we disbelieve them, and did all men make a covenant to disbelieve them, that would not render them the less true. But without faith they will exert no influence on our minds. Without faith, neither fear, nor hope, nor desire will be awakened. Faith connects us with the invisible world; it fastens the heart on heaven; it brings heaven into the heart; assuring us of its truth, and giving us a pledge and foretaste of its enjoyments. "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." Let us ascertain the meaning and feel the force of this.

"Faith is the *evidence of things not seen.*" The objects of faith are things which we do not see. Faith looks not to the things which are seen, but to things which are not seen. God is an object of faith, but we do not see God. He made the world, but we did not witness it. His providence is ceaseless in its operations, but this is not visible to sense. The incarnation, the life, the death, the resurrection, the present reign, and future coming, and judgment of the Lord Jesus Christ, are things which are objects of faith but not of sense. We do not see the innumerable company of angels; we do not see the spirits of the just made perfect; we do not see Jesus the Mediator between God and man; we do not see the sights nor hear the sounds of heaven. Could our senses give us any information respecting those things? None, absolutely none. What could reason discover of these things? Nothing, with certainty. Whence, then, do we possess the information which we have of these things? By means of divine revelation. God has revealed them to us by his Spirit in the Scriptures. The revelation contained in the Scriptures is the object of faith. Faith takes in all that is revealed. It comprehends the past, the present, and the future. It is by faith that we credit their reality and feel their power. All these things are apprehended by faith only. Because we do not see these things, but believe only, are they therefore uncertain? No. "Faith is the

evidence of things not seen." What is evidence? Evidence means proof. Evidence is such proof of the truth of things, as brings full conviction to the mind, satisfies all doubts, and silences all objections. Now the unseen things of eternity are revealed to us by the Spirit of God; and though we have not the evidence of sense, we have two other great evidences by which the Spirit of God bears witness to us of their truth—the outward and the inward witness;—the outward witness of the word which is of his inspiring, and the inward witness of our faith which is of his implanting in the soul. Faith rests upon the testimony of the Spirit of God speaking in the Scriptures; and it therefore cannot be mistaken. Faith within lays hold of this unerring testimony, and reposes upon it with full assurance of certainty. The things that God has revealed are as clear and certain to the believer, as if they were present to his senses. Faith is the evidence of these unseen things. No doubt is left upon the mind. The faith of these things becomes incorporated with our thoughts, feelings, aims and motives; it is inwrought into the very constitution of our souls, and becomes our grand principle and spring of action. Do we inherit sin and misery from Adam? Have we redemption through the blood of Jesus? Is the Divine Spirit the author of every grace in the soul, and of all moral good throughout the world? Is Jesus Christ on high at the head of the whole mediatorial dispensation? Will he come at the last day to raise the dead—to judge the world, and to make an everlasting separation between the righteous and the wicked? Shall the wicked suffer everlasting punishment? Shall the righteous inherit everlasting life? All these things are objects of faith. But they are certain. Faith is their evidence. They are revealed in the Scriptures. They are in harmony with the perfections of God. They commend themselves to our reason and our conscience. They are as evident and certain to the believer as his own existence. He would as soon think of doubting of his own existence as of denying their certainty; and the objections which ignorance and unbelief have raised against these things, are no more to the believer than the babblings of idiotcy or the ravings of insanity.

Faith, however, is more than the evidence of things not seen; it is the "*substance of things hoped for.*" Future blessings are not only revealed but promised. They are not only revealed as certain, but promised as desirable and good. Things may be certain which are not desirable and good; and things may be desirable and good which are not certain. Now,

while the discoveries of the word of God place future blessings before our minds as objects of certainty, the promises of the word of God place them before us as objects infinitely desirable and good. Faith lays hold of these promises, desire springs up in the soul, and desire ripens into hope. Thus faith begets hope, and hope expects and anticipates future blessings. These blessings are future, but they are made present by the exercise of faith. They are as yet objects of hope, and not of possession; but by anticipation their foretaste is actually enjoyed. Thus faith is the substance of things hoped for. It lays hold of the promises, kindles a flame of holy desire in our bosoms, fills us with hope, and awakens within us a crowd of delightful and longing expectations and desires. The triumphs and the joys of the heavenly world, though not now realized as matters of ultimate experience, are yet rendered present by delightful anticipation. Heaven is before us: we have not been put in possession of the inheritance: we are like Israel journeying thither, yet still in the wilderness; but in the exercise of the desires, and hopes, and anticipations of heavenly society, heavenly exercises and joys which faith awakens in our breasts, we have the first-fruits, the pledge, the earnest, the foretaste of heaven. They are as the grapes of Eshcol to Israel in the wilderness, giving us assurance and pledge of the goodly Canaan which God has provided and promised to his people. They are like the views of Pisgah which transport us thither in delightful anticipation, and cause us to rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

Thus we see how it is that faith is so powerful a principle of action, and such moral wonders are ascribed to it in the Scriptures. It unmasks the world, and shows us all its vanity and lies. It shews us that this life is only the infancy of our being, and that hereafter we must receive according as our deeds here have been good or evil. It displays before our minds the Lord Jesus Christ in his two-fold capacity as Saviour and as Judge, and urges us to flee to him and abide in him as Saviour now, that his judgment at the last day may be one of acceptance and not of condemnation. Under the power of this faith we bear up under present evils: we resist temptation: we overcome the world: we are victorious in death; we trample Satan under our feet; and are ultimately more than conquerors.

LUTHER.

HOME AND HEART HEATHENISM.

We talk of the Heathen; and it is impossible to paint too strongly their abominable idolatries, their horrid cruelties, their disgusting obscenities, their varied wickedness. They are truly under the dominion of Satan. But have we no heathen at home? Look at your buying and selling; and is it not full of dissimulation, lying, knavery, and fraud? What unchastity prevails! What sinks of lewdness are all our large towns!—What bold and brazen prostitution nightly throngs our streets! What multitudes of persons never enter the house of God, and on whose ear the voice of mercy never falls? What open violation of the sacred day audaciously despising that God who has reserved the Sabbath for religion! Is there any heathenism in India or China morally worse than this? Will it not be more tolerable for China and for India in the day of judgment?

There is moreover a heart, as well as a home heathenism. It is a mercy that we are not Pagan idolaters. It is a mercy that we enjoy the institutions of Christianity. All, however, are not Christians, who are called so. If we cherish sin in our hearts—if we are godless and prayerless, we "benighted sit under the mid-day sun." Christians in name, we may be heathens in heart. The man who knows that there is but one living God, yet worships him not, is he not worse than the honest idolater who conscientiously bows before some hideous idol? The man called a Christian who sets up covetousness or voluptuousness in his heart, and who sacrifices to drink, to lucre, or to lewdness, his soul's salvation, is he not an idolater in the sight of God, more detestable, than the most ferocious Pagan who ever bowed or immolated himself to the monster Juggernaut?

By nature we have the same evil principles at work in our hearts that the heathen have. Pride, aversion to holiness, self-righteousness, love of animal indulgence, and idolatrous attachment to the creature, are the characteristics of our fallen nature all over the world. I do not mean to say that all are equally evil. Moral evil wears in some lighter, and in others deeper shades of turpitude and malignity. But all have sinned; and evil principles are the same in the heart of man under all diversities of time, country, education, and religion. All are involved in the same common ruin; but, blessed be God, a common salvation is provided for all through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Luther.

THE WORLD.

(From the French of Massillon.)

What is the world, even to those who love it, who are intoxicated with its pleasures, and who cannot live without it? The world! it is a perpetual servitude, where if we strive to be happy, we must kiss its fetters and love its bondage. The world! it is a daily revolution of events, which create in succession the most violent passions, bitter hatreds, odious perplexities, devouring jealousies, and grievous chagrins. The world! it is a place of malediction, where pleasures themselves carry with them their troubles and afflictions. In the world there is nothing lasting; neither fortunes the most affluent—nor friendships the most sincere—nor characters the most exalted—nor favours the most enviable. Men pass their lives in agitations, projects, and schemes; always ready to deceive, or trying to avoid deception; always eager and active to profit by the retirement, disgrace, or death of their competitors; always occupied with their fears or their hopes; always discontented with the present and anxious about the future; never tranquil, doing ever thing for repose, removing still farther from it. Vanity, ambition, vengeance, luxury, avarice—these are the virtues which the world knows and esteems. In the world, integrity passes for simplicity; duplicity and dissimulation are meritorious. Interest the most vile, arms brother against brother, friend against friend, and breaks all the ties of blood and friendship; and it is this base motive which produces our hatreds and attachments! The wants and misfortunes of a neighbour finds only indifference and insensibility, when we can neglect him without loss, or cannot be recompensed for our assistance.

If we could look into two different parts of the world—if we could enter into the secret detail of anxieties and inquietudes—if we could pierce the outward appearances, which offer to our eyes only joy, pleasure, pomp, and magnificence, how different should we find it from what it appears! We should see it destitute of happiness; the father at variance with his child, the husband with his wife, and the antipathies, the jealousies, the murmurs, and the external dissensions of families. We should see friendship broken by suspicions, by interests, by caprices; unions the most endearing dissolved by inconsistency; relations the most tender destroyed by hatred and perfidy; fortunes the most affluent producing more vexa-

tion than happiness; places the most honourable not giving satisfaction, but creating desires for higher advancement; each one complaining of his lot, and the most elevated the most unhappy.

ON WEARING THE CHRISTIAN NAME.

SCIPIO AFRICANUS had a son, who had nothing of the father but the name—a coward—a dissolute, sorry rake—the son of one of the greatest captains in the world! This son wore a ring upon his finger, wherein was his father's picture. His life and character were so opposite to those of his father, and so unworthy, that by an act of the senate he was commanded to forbear wearing that ring. They judged it unfit that he should have the honour to wear the picture of his father, who would not himself be the resemblance of his father's excellence.

It is an edict of greater authority than all the senates in the world, "Let him that nameth the name of CHRIST depart from iniquity." Either part with iniquity or part with the name. Were there any power in being that could now strip every one of the Christian name who had not the Christian temper, how just a thing would it be, that those whose wickedness flatly renounces their Christian baptism, should be obliged to fling the name after it, and take their rank among baptized heathens!

A Pagan life and spirit, and a Christian name, are a shame to each other. It is one way of "taking his name in vain;" it is worse; it is throwing his name in the dirt, and trampling upon it.

THE VALUE OF MONEY.

I REMEMBER (says a clergyman) some years ago to have buried a corpse. In the extremity of the audience that surrounded me, I discovered a female wrinkled with age, and bending with weakness; one hand held a motherless grandchild, the other wiped away her tears with the corner of a woollen apron. I pressed towards her when the service was closed. Have you lost a friend? She heaved a melancholy sigh—"The Lord bless her memory!" I soon found the deceased had allowed her, for several years, sixpence per week. Is it possible, thought I, that a sum so inconsiderable may cause

a widow's heart to sing for joy, and save the child of the needy! Who, then, would waste a *sixpence* in extravagance? Who would not deny himself to be able to secure the blessing of them that are ready to perish?

EXCUSES FOR DRINKING.

THE following list of excuses for drinking is stated by a London paper to have been actually made, in the course of a single week, by drunkards, at the police offices:

One had been drinking because his child was dead, another because he had a child born. One had buried his wife, another had got married. One had been binding a boy to be an apprentice, another had been at the feast of one who had finished his apprenticeship. Another had met a friend who had just returned from abroad, another was parting with a friend who was going abroad. Another had received bad news, another good news. Another had met a heavy loss, another had made a profitable bargain. Another had no work, and another had got a good job of work.

A certain physician used to say, "Some persons call for a glass of spirits because it is cold, some because it is hot; but, said the Doctor, when I call for it in the presence of such persons, I give it the proper reason; and that is, because *I like it.*"

USES OF FIRE.

THE gift of fire is one of the most useful which a bountiful Creator has bestowed on man. What would we be without fire? The application and advantages are endless. Fire is our substitute for the light and heat of the sun at those seasons when he withdraws from us. We warm ourselves by means of fire. We prepare our provisions by means of fire. We light our houses, and streets, and roads by means of fire. Our steamships defy and defeat both wind and tide by means of fire, and our steam-engines perform, by means of fire, ten times the mechanical labour which could be performed by all the men, women, and children, and all the horses and other working animals, now living on the face of the earth.

DUTCH FUNERALS.

Among the lower ranks, all who can claim the slightest acquaintance with the deceased, follow the body to the grave. They then return to pay their respects to the widow, who provides liquor for them; and after partaking of three or four glasses each, they all depart except the relatives and friends of the family, who remain to revel. At this feast, the nearest relation presides. Bumpers are drunk to the repose and welfare of the defunct, and to the prosperity of the living, until all griefs are drowned in gin and beer. Songs, decent, ludicrous, and vicious, succeed. Music then strikes up; the widow leads off the dance, which, with boisterous amusements, are continued until day dawns.—"*My Note Book,*" *by Macgregor.*

STRIKING SENTENCES.

Confession of sin should come like water from a spring that runs freely; and not like water from a still, that is forced by the fire of affliction. A zealous soul without meekness, is like a ship in a storm, in danger of wrecks. A meek soul without zeal, is like a ship in a calm, that moves not so fast to its harbour as it ought.

A Christian's birth is like the *Red Sea*, that brings him into the wilderness; his death is like *Jordan*, that brings him into *Canaan*.

They that are professors only, and make shew of religion for sinister ends, are like Orpha; in times of affliction they will kiss their mother, and be gone; they will soon take leave of the church of God. But they that are true Christians are like Ruth, they will cleave to her, stay by her, live and die with her, and never depart from her.

A wicked man is like one that hangs over a deep pit by a slender cord in one hand, and is cutting it with the other.

An hypocrite is the picture of a saint; but his paint shall be washed off, and he shall appear in his own colours.

An hypocrite is hated of the world for seeming a Christian, and hated of God for not being one.

We must be *sick* of sin, before we can be *dead* to sin.

J. Wilson, Printer, Belfast